

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as indicated below.

1. (Currently Amended) An aqueous pigment paste free from binders and grinding resins, comprising ~~based on its overall amount~~
(A) from 15 to 40% by weight of at least one metal pigment.
(B) from 0.45 to 0.75% by weight of at least one nonassociative thickener comprising at least one methacrylate copolymer based on C₁-C₆ alkyl (meth)acrylate and (meth)acrylic acid,
(C) from 0.1 to 0.4% by weight of at least one organic amine,
(D) from 0.5 to 8% by weight of at least one nonionic surfactant, and
(E) at least 50% by weight of water,
based on total weight.
2. (Currently Amended) The paste ~~as claimed in of~~ claim 1, wherein the thickener (B) ~~contains~~comprises in copolymerized form at least two different C₁-C₆ alkyl (meth)acrylate monomers.
3. (Currently Amended) The paste ~~as claimed in either of~~ claims 1 ~~and 2~~, wherein the thickener (B), based on its ~~overall amount~~total weight, ~~contains~~comprises from 40 to 60% by weight of methacrylic acid in copolymerized form.
4. (Currently Amended) The paste ~~as claimed in any of~~ claims 1 ~~to 3~~, wherein the organic amine (C) is selected from the group consisting of ~~the~~ tertiary amines.
5. (Currently Amended) The paste ~~as claimed in of~~ claim 4, wherein the tertiary amine (C) is selected from the group consisting of ~~the~~ hydroxyalkylamines.

6. (Currently Amended) The paste ~~as claimed in~~ claim 5, wherein the hydroxyalkylamine (C) is dimethylethanolamine.
7. (Currently Amended) The paste ~~as claimed in any of claims 1 to 6~~, wherein the metal pigment (A) comprises ~~is an~~ aluminum pigment.
8. (Currently Amended) The paste ~~as claimed in any of claims 1 to 7~~, comprising ~~based on its overall amount at least 52% by weight, in particular 54% by weight, of water,~~ based on total weight.
9. (Currently Amended) The paste ~~as claimed in any of claims 1 to 8~~, comprising ~~based on its overall amount~~
(A) 34% by weight of an aluminum pigment,
(B) 0.53% by weight of a nonassociative thickener comprising at least one methacrylate copolymer based on C₁-C₆ alkyl (meth)acrylate and (meth)acrylic acid,
(C) 0.22% by weight of an organic amine,
(D) 0.61% by weight of a nonionic surfactant, and
(E) 54% by weight of water,
based on total weight.
10. (Currently Amended) A method of preparing a coating material, comprising adding ~~The use of an aqueous pigment paste free from binders and grinding resins, as claimed in any of claims 1 to 9, to for preparing an aqueous effect, or color and effect, coating materials~~ comprising at least one effect pigment.
11. (Currently Amended) The ~~method use as claimed in~~ claim 10, wherein the aqueous coating materials are aqueous basecoat materials.
12. (Currently Amended) A method for making a multicoat paint system, comprising applying the ~~The use as claimed in~~ aqueous coating material of claim

~~10 or 11, wherein the aqueous coating materials serve for producing multicoat effect, or color and effect, paint systems, to a substrate.~~

13. (Currently Amended) A process for preparing an aqueous ~~effect or color and effect-coating material~~ comprising at least one effect pigment, comprising by mixing at least one pigment paste with at least one aqueous mixing varnish comprising at least one water-soluble and/or -dispersible binder and homogenizing the resulting mixture, wherein the at least one pigment paste comprises which comprises using at at the -least one aqueous pigment paste free from binders and grinding resins, as claimed in any of claims 1 to 9, and is used, in an amount such that the resulting mixture ~~aqueous effect or color and effect-coating material comprises based on its overall amount~~
- from 0.1 to 6% by weight of at least one metal pigment (A),
 - from 0.05 to 2% by weight of at least one nonassociative thickener (B) comprising at least one methacrylate copolymer based on C₁-C₆ alkyl (meth)acrylate and (meth)acrylic acid, and
 - from 0.02 to 2.4% by weight of at least one nonionic surfactant (D), based on total weight.
14. (Currently Amended) The process ~~as claimed in of~~ claim 13, wherein the binder is selected from the group consisting of random (co)polymers, alternating (co)polymers, ~~and~~ block (co)polymers, linear (co)polymers, branched (co)polymers, ~~and~~ comb addition (co)polymers, ~~of (co)polymers comprising~~ ethylenically unsaturated monomers, ~~or~~ polyaddition resins, and/or polycondensation resins, and combinations comprising at least two of the foregoing.
15. (Currently Amended) The process ~~as claimed in of~~ claim 14, comprising wherein the at least one member selected from addition (co)polymers of ethylenically unsaturated monomers are selected from the group consisting of

(meth)acrylate (co)polymers, and partially hydrolyzed polyvinyl esters; especially (meth)acrylate copolymers, and the polyaddition resins and/or polycondensation resins are selected from the group consisting of polyesters, alkyds, polyurethanes, polylactones, polycarbonates, polyethers, epoxy resin-amine adducts, polyureas, polyamides, polyimides, polyester-polyurethanes, polyether-polyurethanes, and polyester-polyether-polyurethanes, especially polyester-polyurethanes and combinations of at least two of the foregoing; polycondensation resins selected from the group consisting of polyesters, alkyds, polyurethanes, polylactones, polycarbonates, polyethers, epoxy resin-amine adducts, polyureas, polyamides, polyimides, polyester-polyurethanes, polyether-polyurethanes, polyester-polyether-polyurethanes and combinations of at least two of the foregoing; and combinations of at least two of the foregoing.